



Habitats

interior rivers and streams

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

northeast Iowa coldwater streams

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.

slimy sculpin

Cottus cognatus

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Osteichthyes
Family:	Perciformes
Order:	Cottidae

Features

The slimy sculpin rarely exceeds four inches long. The head, back, and sides are olive-brown with dark mottling. The lower portion of the head and belly are lighter to whitish. The head and front of the body are flattened top to bottom. The mouth is at the tip of the snout and has many teeth. The dorsal fin is almost completely separated into two portions. The body is scaleless.

Natural History

The slimy sculpin lives in northeast Iowa where it is found on the stream bottom. It lies motionless for long periods of time and is difficult to see because its coloration blends with the stream bottom. It eats larvae of aquatic insects and other invertebrates. It spawns in late April and May. The male cleans a cavity and the female deposits clusters of eggs on the underside of stones. The male guards the nest three to four weeks until the fry leave. Records indicate slimy sculpin live up to five years.